

**American University of Beirut**  
**Minutes of the University Senate**  
**General Meeting of Friday 30 April 2010**

Present: A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, G. Araj, L. Choueiri, A. Dallal (chair), N. Dajani, J. DeJong, H. Diab, M. El-Sabban, G. El-Hajj Fuleihan (by invitation), L. Farhood, J. Ghafari, N. Hwalla, K. Hindi, H. Huijjer, S. Isber, A. Jurjus, Z. Kassaify, A. Kayssi, S. Kenney, R. Khaulil, P. McGreevy, F. Moukalled (for I. Hajj), L. Musfy, G. Najjar, A. Nasri, N. Nassif, S. Neaime, I. Nuwayhid, I. Osman, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, S. Seikaly, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, M. Tabbal.

Absent: S. Arnaout, P. Dorman\*, S. Jeffrey\*, M. Jurdi, M. Kisirwani, S. Maamari\*, M. Sayegh\*, R. Zurayk.

(\* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 26 March 2010 were approved unanimously as corrected.

2. *Institutional Review Board (IRB) fees and procedures.* Provost Dallal opened discussion by saying that the level of IRB fees would ultimately have to be discussed at an administrative level, but he welcomed discussion on IRB implementation. He then asked G. El-Hajj Fuleihan to outline present IRB procedures. She said that the important issue was not whether or at what level IRB fees would be collected this academic year, which was just a drop in the ocean, but the commitment by everyone in the academic community to move forwards. She outlined the history and administrative structure of the IRB from its inception in 1996 to the introduction of a separate Social and Behavioural Science committee in 2009. From a mere ten cases in 1996 the board had reviewed more than five hundred cases in 2009. This had required a huge commitment to educate the faculty and to facilitate the process of review. She gave figures to show improvement in the time taken to review cases. She again stressed that senators and leaders of the academic community be fully committed to the process.

Senators raised several questions. I. Osman said that there was frustration over delays in obtaining IRB approval, particularly where outside funding was sought. By way of reply Provost Dallal invited senators to join the IRB committees, adding that they were following international procedures. N. Dajani said that there was a danger of stifling field research done by students while taking courses in the social sciences, and he proposed the formation of a departmental sub-committee to examine research proposals before submission to the IRB. M. El-Sabbah suggested that a commitment to obtain IRB approval might be sufficient when research funds were sought abroad, rather than prior approval. In reply to his further question what the criteria was for selecting in-house reviewers, G. Fuleihan said that both expertise in the scientific field and familiarity with IRB procedures were required. In reply to a question from Dean Hwalla whether the IRB, in reviewing both the scientific component of research proposals and the ethical component, was not increasing the likelihood of delay, G. Fuleihan said that bad science was bad ethics, but she hoped that each faculty and school would develop its own independent body to review the scientific component. H. Huijjer said that review at the faculty level would expedite the process. In reply to a question from Dean Najjar concerning what benchmarks were being applied, G. Fuleihan said that while approval sometimes took as long as 50 to 60 days, the average time to issue exemptions was now four days. She added that delay was often caused by a violation of procedure on the part of the applicant, to the extent of harassment of IRB officers over the telephone. Finally, M. El-Sabbah asked what the most important outcome would be after a year, to which Provost Dallal said that seventeen policies and procedures were at present under review and that, while quite a bit had been achieved already, the university would see further improvement. He added that because present costs were very much higher there was no question of not charging fees. To this N. Dajani said he was against being charged fees.

3. *Update on Plan A / Plan B.* VP Radulski said that the committee charged by the president to look at the issue of equity between Plans A and B was relatively close to a proposal but needed further time for fine tuning. I. Osman regretted the personalization of disagreement when this occurred, saying that everybody was working for the institution of the university. As a member of the president's committee F. Sleiman said that meetings had been cordial and agreement would be reached within the next month.

4. *Proposal for changing the name of the Department of Health Behavior and Education in the Faculty of Health Sciences.* Dean Nuwayhid introduced a proposal to change the name of the department to Health Promotion and Community Health, a memo concerning which had been circulated to senators before the meeting. He said that the previous name had implied a focus more on individual health and that the proposed change was in line with most schools and programs of public health in the USA. He proposed a motion which was seconded that **the senate approve changing the name of the Department of Health Behavior and Education in the Faculty of Health Sciences to the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health.** In answer to a question from A. Abdul-Malak whether the change would involve modifications of course syllabi, Dean Nuwayhid said that the new name reflected what they were already doing, the only new course being on advocacy. "Health promotion" was now widely used while there was some variation in the terms used to designate community health. In response to a comment by Dean Najjar that from a marketing point of view the proposed name, with the word health repeated, might not sell well, Dean Nuwayhid said that there had been extensive discussion on the issue within the faculty of Health Sciences and that this was the preferred option. Other suggestions were made. N. Nassif confirmed that the proposal had been approved by the Academic Development Committee.

**Vote 2010-13: the motion was carried unanimously.**

5. *Proposed Early Admission policy.* Provost Dallal introduced a plan to admit early those students who satisfied certain requirements, as stated in a memo that had been circulated to senators before the meeting. S. Sadek said that he welcomed the improvement but felt that in practice additional criteria were being applied that were not clearly stated. He expressed dissatisfaction at the way admissions were being dealt with; admission files having been complete since January 15, he asked when composite scores had been completed. F. Moukalled said that composite scores had been completed a week ago, adding that composite scores combined SAT scores with school grades. Provost Dallal said that the issue was not easy and that a task force was considering the issue. I. Osman pleaded for an online admission procedure that might signal to applicants missing elements in their files before submission. The last paragraph of the memo was modified to read as follows (additions in italics): "*Early admission decisions are issued by January 30... (...) Decisions on regular admissions are issued by the end of April.*" A motion was proposed and seconded **to approve the early admission plan, as stated in the modified memo.**

**Vote 2010-14: the motion was carried unanimously.**

6. *Election of a senate representative to the BOT meeting in June 2010.* The names of A. Abdel-Rahman and F. Sleiman were proposed. A secret ballot was taken resulting in the election of A. Abdel-Rahman.

7. *Faculty travel issues.* A. Abdelnoor said that the issue had been resolved after the last meeting of the Senate Steering Committee and he therefore wished to withdraw the item from the agenda. There was no objection.

8. *Other business.*

(a) *Meeting of the SCFA with the BOT.* S. Seikaly, chair of the Senate Committee for Faculty Affairs, requested that the SCFA be allowed to meet the BOT during its forthcoming visit to

the campus. Provost Dallal said that if there was a time-slot he would try to arrange it. S. Kenney said that he knew of at least one meeting with the BOT that had been cancelled.

- (b) *HIP insurance in emergency.* Citing his own recent experience N. Dajani questioned the practice by which priority appeared to be given even in the emergency room of AUH to those with MedGulf insurance rather than HIP. VP Radulski asked that this complaint be put in writing. There was discussion about the rules that are supposed to be followed on admission to the emergency room. R. Khauli said that, as a specialist physician sometimes called to the emergency room, the question of which company a patient was insured with did not arise. G. Araj suggested that both G. Hamadeh from Family Medicine and F. Jamali, Director of the emergency room, be invited to the next meeting of the senate.
- (c) *Faculty-One Housing.* S. Sadek regretted an apparent lack of coordination in planning whereby residents of Faculty-I Housing were asked to find alternative housing in order that the building be demolished for a planned extension to AUH, even while renovations of the building were going on. VP Radulski objected to the use of the word eviction, since the notice served to residents had been crafted carefully. S. Sadek said that the notice was perceived as eviction by those whose complaint he was bringing to the senate's attention.
- (d) *Reappointment procedure.* J. Ghafari said that a memo had recently been sent to faculty members in the faculty of medicine calling for full-time professors seeking reappointment to submit not only 1) an updated C.V. but also 2) personal statements on teaching, research and service, 3) their clinical workload, 4) a teaching portfolio, 5) a research sheet, 6) a list of at least six external referees, 7) selected publications, and 8) a Time and Effort form. He pointed out that this was in complete contradiction with the recent memo circulated by the provost on April 16 after discussion in the last meeting of the senate. Provost Dallal promised to look into the matter.
- (e) *Reinstatement.* Provost Dallal said in answer to a query that one year was the normal period before a student could be reinstated after being dropped from a faculty.
- (f) *Admission policy for graduate students.* I. Osman said that with the increasing emphasis on higher education in the university it was important to make admission requirements clear in order not to lose good candidates.
- (g) *Increase in tuition fees.* F. Sleiman said that the implications of a possible net 25% increase in tuition fees needed to be discussed in the senate before such an increase was implemented.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

R. Smith, secretary